



RTOERO Response to 2021 Saskatchewan Recycling Program Consultation



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On behalf of RTOERO, we are pleased to submit this feedback to help inform the review of *The Household Packaging and Paper Stewardship Program Regulations* and the Multi-Material Recycling Program.

Since 1968, RTOERO has been a voice for teachers, school and board administrators, educational support staff and college and university faculty in their retirement. Our mission is to improve the lives of our members and seniors.

Environmental stewardship is of prime importance to our 81,000+ members. A sustainable future depends on responsible use of resources, conservation, and protecting our air, land and water. Individuals, companies, industry groups and governments all have a part to play in environmental stewardship.

We need to maintain the viability of our ecosystems for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren.





1. Common Recycling Standards

With all the recycling efforts made by municipalities and companies, there's much room to improve. For instance, Deloitte reports that just 9% of the plastic waste generated annually in Canada is recycled. One hurdle to greater progress is the lack of a harmonized approach across jurisdictions.

Government policies or incentives can help us move from a linear economy (ongoing consumption of resources) to a circular one (reusing resources). That is a broader imperative. Other steps can help us to increase the recycling rate, and lower contamination rates (i.e. non-recyclable material in the recycling system).

2. Single-Use Plastics

The federal government will ban many single-use plastics starting this year. Questions remain around what items will be on the list and the phase-in period. The ban doesn't address the issue of the use of non-essential plastics. We need a government approach to manage the entire life cycle of plastics.



3. Environmentally-Sustainable Transportation

Beyond the issues surrounding packaging, paper, plastics and recycling, RTOERO is concerned about other stewardship issues.

Transportation accounts for about one-quarter of Canada’s carbon emissions. As our population and economy grows, so do the number of vehicles on our roads.

Saskatchewan’s carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions, while down in the Canada’s latest emissions inventory released in Aril 2021, remains disproportionately high. In fact, Saskatchewan, with 3% of the national population accounts for 10.3% of Canada’s total megatonnes – the highest per capita emissions of any province.

Progressive government policies can drive more sustainable transportation, i.e. electric vehicles (although Saskatchewan is the first province to implement a tax on them), cleaner public transport, clean fuel standards, biking, etc.

4. Safe Water Supply

Our freshwater resources are a national treasure. Yet pollution and misuse threatens that. Meanwhile, while urban centres enjoy access to clean water, several First Nations in Saskatchewan experience drinking water advisories.

Legislation and changes in business practices both have a role in protecting our freshwater sources. Beyond just calling on the federal government to fulfill its responsibility, Saskatchewan can also play a part in supporting upgraded water systems and alleviating the drinking water crisis in the province’s First Nations communities.

Who we are

RTOERO is a bilingual trusted voice for healthy, active living in retirement. With 81,000+ members in districts across Canada, we are the largest national provider of non-profit group health benefits for education community retirees. We welcome members who work in or are retired from the early years, schools and school boards, post-secondary and the broader education sector.

We believe in the power of our community to secure a better future.

For more information:

- visit our website at rtoero.ca
- call 1-800-361-9888
- email media@rtoero.ca

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